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REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as amended is respectfully requested.

Applicants' Attorney acknowledges, with thanks, the telephone conference with the Examiner on September 5, 2006 in which the present amendment was discussed prospectively.

As pointed out in the remarks of the Amendment dated May 17, 2006, it was believed that by incorporating the subject matter of Claim 21 into Claim 16 in that Amendment, Claims 16-18 and 20 would be made allowable. However, in the Office Action dated June 6, 2006, U.S. Patent No. 6,484,979 to Medlin, Jr. was cited for the first time and relied upon in rejecting Claims 16-18 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

It is apparent that the only movement contemplated by Medlin is a longitudinal movement (in which lips 40 and 40' might move over objects or cables within a trough). In Applicants' invention, however, retaining elements 22 move transversely across the troughs, as is apparent in Figs. 5 and 6 of Applicants' drawings, for example. No such action is disclosed or contemplated by Medlin.

Accordingly, Claims 16-18 and 20 are deemed allowable. This application is now clearly in condition for allowance.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge to Deposit Account No. 50-1165 (A-10040) any fees under 37

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C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 that may be required by this paper
and to credit any overpayment to that Account. If any
extension of time is required in connection with the filing
of this paper and has not been separately requested, such
extension is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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NHS:kss
September 6, 2006

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